1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
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*241
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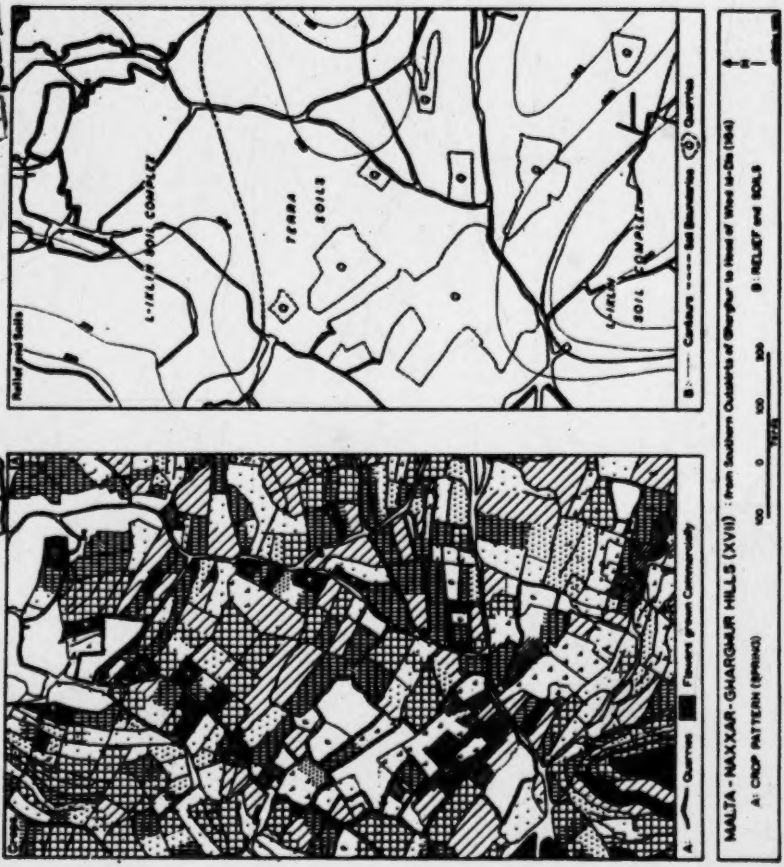
[34]



[247]
316

Fig. 115 Malta: Naxxar-Gharghur Hills.

Such dry land farmers need about 20 *tmien* or more of cultivable land in order to make a reasonable living by rural standards. They and their families are necessarily expert in traditional ways of cultivating a considerably range of crops. Most of them rely on home raised seed except for spring potatoes and very few of them need very much liquid capital. Under normal conditions there is no debt problem. Production of individual items is generally small and, unless they have direct connections with wholesalers and retailers in nearby towns, they rely very much on the collection and sale of produce through middlemen. Their expertise is largely a matter of hard won experience of handling particular soils and crops and very limited in other ways. 241

4. THE SPECIALISED CROP PRODUCER

Lastly, there is the small group of highly specialised arable farmers. These are mainly producers of flowers or seeds and, at their highest stage of development, sell their high-value produce abroad. In practically all cases the only thing that distinguishes them from their neighbours is knowledge and initiative. The next example shows the type of indigenous development that is fairly easily attained. Here, and in the next stage of export marketing, lies one of the hopes for Malta's economic future and stability for Maltese agriculture. 247

H - This farmer and one adult son have 20 *tmien* of land in Region C XVII. Seventeen *tmien* are farmed under a relatively extensive cereal, sulla, catch-crop system, the remaining 3 *tmien* (Fig. 142) intensively cultivated under flowers - 'More profitable than normal Maltese agriculture'. A rotational sequence is practised of flowers, vegetables and a 'resting crop' of wheat or sulla. Vines are grown on wallsides. This farmer occasionally hires contract ploughing but normally hand-hoes 12 to 18 inches deep *Terra* soils and regularly and heavily applies sulphate of ammonia as well as green manure. Flower seed is imported annually from the U.K. and Holland, since Maltese strains are poor and diseased, and imported strains rapidly degenerate. Produce is sold directly in the relatively wealthy suburb of Sliema. A characteristic range of flowers together with some nine different vegetables at Easter would be:-

Alliums	Broom	Freesias	Larkspur	Narcissi	Tulips
Anemones	Carnations	Gladioli	Love-in-a-mist	Roses	Violets
Bluebells	Dahlias	Gypsophila	Marguerites	Iris	
			Marigolds		

5. MILK PRODUCERS

Another main group of farmers consists of milk producers. Differentiation between them is considerable depending as it does on the scale of production, the efficiency of production and on whether cows or goats are kept. At the lowest end of the scale come the virtually landless small-scale producers of goats' milk. These are the last survivors of a traditionally important class of urban herders who, before the control and pasteurisation of milk, delivered milk 'on the hoof' in towns and villages. Typical is case-study:- 234

I - This producer rents 2 *tmien* of land in Hamrun, half of which is used for domestically consumed garden produce. The remainder gives some exercise space and grazing for a herd of goats varying between 50 and 30 in number. This herd, which includes some 25 milkers, is over-fed on purchased fodder, and gives an average daily milk production ranging from a winter minimum of c. 30 lb. per day to c. 70 lb. per day in summer. Individual yields are low in quantity and quality and the farmer and his eight surviving children only survive in debt-ridden existence because of the M.M.U's guaranteed prices. He has no capital or equipment and the family's food consumption comes half from the garden plot and is further supplemented by food gifts from C.A.R.E. (an American welfare organisation). There is no real future for this type of livestock farmer.

Higher in the scale come the goats' milk producers who are able to rely on fodder from their own lands. One such, in Gozo, Region I, 'The West, may be summarised thus:-